

DARPA-BAA-11-51 CBMEN Q&A

May 13, 2011

Q1: Would the use of small unit UAVs like WASP and Raven as a source of geolocated video content be of interest in the demonstration and overall program

A1: This is not the focus of the program, but an MSI team is welcome to propose this as an application.

Q2: How can we ensure that the baseline for the metrics derived from simulation are accurate representations of non-CBMEN performance?

A2: Simulation is intended to provide insight, not answers. The Government team will work with the performers to clarify simulation assumptions and validate the metrics.

Q3: How will MIT-LL emulate new MANET radio systems for which they may not have prior exposure?

A3: The Government team will work with the performers as the program progresses.

Q4: How soon must MSIs make MANET APIs available? Must they pre-exist, or can they be developed during the program?

A4: DARPA would like to use pre-existing MANETs. DARPA expects each MSI to bring in a MANET at the start of the program

Q5: For Technical Area 2, assuming delivery of a prototype system, can DARPA further define the characteristics of the prototype system?

A5: No, this is up to the MSI.

Q6: Under the MSI effort, will DARPA be interested in funding development of high fidelity simulation/emulation tools for a network radio platform selected by a MSI?

A6: No.

Q7: In real-world operations the scenarios define the relevant application. Here, the MSIs define the applications. How can we be sure that these are coordinated and the right applications are used?

A7: TDs must work with the MSIs throughout the program to define/develop suitable applications. The MSIs will be evaluated, in part, on the appropriateness of the applications. Throughout the program, applications may be refined or replaced.

Q8: Are there tentative plans on logistics of the end-of-phase field tests for costing purposes?

A8: No.

Q9: What scope of technology development proposals are sought? I.E., bidding to one of the four tasks, or possibly several closely related tasks? Are small scale, targeted teams sought, focusing on 1 or 2 tasks?

A9: DARPA is open to all possibilities.

Q10: Do you intend to evaluate the mission effectiveness improvement provided by the solutions, assessing how the timeliness and location relevance of the content has improved mission capability?

A10: Yes.

Q11: How many responses to a query are you looking for (all nodes, half nodes, progressive until an approximate or exact match is found, etc.)? Is latency or accuracy more important?

A11: This is situation-dependent and up to the proposer.

Q12: The BAA states that the MSI's will provide "data radios", can we assume these are IP radios? Can we also assume that they are IPv6 compliant as currently required by DISA and the FAR?

A12: The choice of radio/network is up to the MSIs. TDs may select to work with an MSI whose radio/network best fits their technology.

Q13: What are the test ranges available to us? We are assuming that they will have proper RF simulation with hardware in the loop equipment to perform a complex repeatable test for software validation. We need to know the test range location(s) to propose accurate travel costs.

A13: The test ranges have not been established. DARPA is open to suggestions. MSIs are encouraged to propose ranges along with their demonstration plans.

Q14: Does the Technical Area 2 team need to "firewall" from the Technical Area 1 team if from the same company?

A14: No. However, TDs are expected to be independent and open to working with either MSI.

Q15: Is there a list of preferred handsets and radios to guide developers?

A15: No. The MSIs are expected to propose hardware solutions.

Q16: What Government organization will be performing the end of phase testing?

A16: The MSIs will define the final demonstrations, and will work with the Government team to instrument the system and collect data.

Q17: What are reasonable assumptions regarding the generation rate of the data?

A17: This is dependent upon the applications selected by the MSIs.

Q18: What is the relationship between security and content classification? Is the objective to control access to the MANETs? Is one of the objectives to solve classified content transmission between MANETs with different levels of classified material?

A18: Multi-level security is not a focus of the program. Cross-MANET security is not a focus of the program.

Q19: When do you expect the program to start?

A19: It is expected to start around September, 2011

Q20: Can you submit a proposal for one specific area in TD?

A20: Yes.

Q21: What do you mean by content? Are you concerned about accessing and distinguishing all tactical combat information, such as position – location info, events, situation reports, watch list information, hot spot areas, and personality information?

A21: Content is any information relevant to the warfighter.

Q22: Do you believe that the CBMEN software can execute on a MANET radio and do you believe that it can store information?

A22: CBMEN is predicated on availability of these technologies. The MSIs are asked to propose systems capable of supporting CBMEN.

Q23: Are you concerned with integrating with existing Army Battle Command Systems which contain information about many of the warfighting functions, such as C2, Intel, etc.?

A23: This is not a focus of the program.

Q24: How strict will ITAR restriction be?

A24: We will strictly follow ITAR regulations.

Q25: If a company is successful in serving a TD contract or subcontract, will they be allowed to act as a vendor or sub to a MSI contract?

A25: Yes.

Q26: Can a company bid as a prime in one area and a sub in the other?

A26: Yes.

Q27: Is Technical Area 1, Task 4 interested in evaluating multi-level security?

A27: This is not a focus of the program.

Q28: How soon can we expect the Government team to provide evaluation scenarios, data sets, and guidelines necessary for self-assessments?

A28: Baseline simulation scenarios and thresholds for key metrics are expected to be available at the program kickoff.

Q29: On the spectrum from research to applied, where does this project tend to fall? Closer to basic research or closer to transition/development?

A29: This program has 6.3 funding: Advanced Technology Development.

Q30: Does a Technical Area 1 vendor need to team with potential Technical Area 2 vendors?

A30: No. Technical Area 1 and Technical Area 2 require separate proposals and will be evaluated separately.

Q31: Can a Technical Area 1 vendor directly run emulation experiment (skipping simulation) for self-assessment?

A31: As long as progress can be established and demonstrated at various stages during the program.

Q32: For Technical Area 1, does the vendor need to provide a completely solution or would a partial subset be ok?

A32: A partial subset is acceptable, as long it fits with the rest of the program and can be integrated to provide a complete solution.

Q33: Can you describe the capabilities of the Radio that will display the content? What kind of radios are we delivering content to? Visual or voice?

A33: The MSIs are responsible for defining hardware solutions to support content distribution.

Q34: Have you given any consideration to how to handle the vast amount of unstructured data that CBMEN will be ingesting and how you locate, distribute and share the content?

A34: This is a topic for proposers to address.